• The Progressive Review

Nbr 334
April 1995

Why getting organized is so hard to do

The difficulty in rallying support for a vigorous opposition to the malignant forces now in control of the capital is a painful reminder of how the idea of community has disintegrated even among those who use the word the most. The atomization of our culture has reached into almost every corner of America, disabling once natural inclinations to associate and help one another.

For the right it is no problem -- money, power and ambition provide sufficient glue. But for those who are appalled or endangered by the Gingrich juggernaut, there is too often only a faded memory of what it was like to do something in concert with a broad range of others -- others who are not a close match of oneself, others who might only agree on the few desperate issues of the moment, others who puncture the nice verities about diversity by being, well, *too* other.

There are additional problems, including the fact that many of the brightest voices for decency have long been absorbed by specific issues that concern them most -- a fair enough, even desirable, choice in many ways -- but in aggregate and over time leaving a vacuum of voices speaking of generic issues to a generic constituency.

Then there has been the rise of a public interest technocracy in which moral force and philosophical compass have been too often subsumed by mechanistic or legalistic tinkering with legislation and policy. At worse, some of these technocrats have even become co-dependent on what it is they are attempting to change.

There has also been a splintering of alternative media into specialized functions -- again perfectly justifiable in the specific but leaving fewer places where a generalized politics can be discussed and formed. Non-alternative publications that once provided at least ancillary service to ideas, such as the *New Yorker*, have become clintonized -- succumbing to a groping for political fashionablility and cultural stylishness, an effort that has largely produced only a dreary drift towards the ephemeral and the reactionary. Thus two journalists, submitting a blockbuster story to *Vanity Fair*, were recently informed that it was "too substantive" for the publication.

Even the so-called alternative urban weeklies are really more alternative advertising media than alternatives to anything else, functioning in no small part as guides away from political and social action and towards a self-indulgent cocoon. And the message of self-righteous yet curiously joyless hedonism that flows through increasingly depressing journals such as the *Village Voice* is redundant at best. Its readers already have enough unsafe sex. What they need is more unsafe journalism.

New York's other cultural caliphs continue not only to hog the publishing industry, the theater and other arts, but what is written about them, creating an endless loop of self-promotion and self-approval. The cultural and media power of New York, like the political and media power of Washington, largely serves as an inhibitor of imagination, ideas and change-- projecting these centers' own dreary, decadent accommodation with the urban apocalypse upon the rest of the country.

To find change and the thinking that is its precursor one picks up not the *New York Review of Books* but the midwest's *Utne Reader* or the west coast's *In Context*. For new economic ideas you go to the E. F. Schumacher Institute in Great Barrington, Mass., or to the Sovereignty movement headquartered in southern Illinois. For new thinking on city planning, check with Urban Ecology in San Francisco. For a radical ideas about dealing with the modern corporation talk with Richard Grossman in Provincetown, MA. For new ideas about labor unions, search out UAW's New Directions in Missouri and elsewhere. For the philosophy behind the Green movement, the most important new political concept since the social welfare state, go to Maine, Minnesota, Hawaii, California or New Mexico. And so forth.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Progressive Review
Bucking the system since 1966

The Progressive Review is published 10 times a year. Formerly the DC Gazette. One year subscription: $17. Two year subscription: $31. Single copies: $2.00. The Review uses Pacific News Service and monitors Peacenet.

Editor: Sam Smith
The Progressive Review
1739 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington DC 20009
202-232-5544
Fax Nbr: 202-234-6222

Internet: ssmith @ igc. org
Compuserve: 72067,1525
Prodigy: SFGW68A
ISSN 0889-2202

Hotline: *If you are a subscriber we will add you to our on-line hotline. Send your e-mail address to any of the addresses above.*

Become a supporting subscriber: *Many small circulation publications keep going with the help of supporting subscribers who contribute a sum in addition to their regular subscription to aid the publication in its work. We will be grateful if you indicate your support of our efforts by subscribing or renewing with a contribution above the normal fee or by sending us a contribution today. Mail to the Progressive Review, 1739 Connecticut Ave NW DC 20009*

Help spread the word: *To introduce the Review to friends through a free trial subscription, just write their names and addresses on a postcard and send it to the Review.*

Copyright 1995, The Progressive Review.

Articles not otherwise copyrighted may be reprinted by other periodicals provided they give proper credit and pay their normal reprint fees, if any

The progressive movement is full of ideas and vision. It has, however, been forced to sell these ideas and this vision door to door, largely ignored even by those traditional journals pretending to intellectual curiosity -- publications too often run by old leftists who don't understand new ideas, ex-leftists who don't like them, or non-leftists who think that being radical is something one does with mousse.

At the other end of the message hierarchy is the suffocating semiosphere of the two dozen or so corporations that control a majority of what Americans, read, see and hear. This incorporation of the media has produced, among other things, a new breed of compliant journalists who donate their minds and souls to their company much as sales reps donate their charm and assertiveness. Once owners of newspapers and radio stations knew better than to trust their creative employees, but this is no longer a problem.

It seems more accurate, in fact, to describe contemporary journalists by their true function, i.e. "David Broder, an employee of the Fortune 500 company, the Washington Post Corporation" or "Tom Brokaw, an employee of a subsidiary of the General Electric Corporation" Such wording is more objective, to borrow a word, than to persist in the myth that those who must pee on demand to prove virtue to their corporate superiors can be trusted with the care of a free press.

The incorporation of the media mind has made dealing with social and political problems far more difficult than, say, during the sixties. Since then the country's establishment has discovered innumerable ways to ignore problems or to make them irrelevant.

For the media this has included a much greater facility at not noticing what it wishes didn't exist and a subtle and ever-rising threshold of human pain and humiliation that is considered normal enough not to report.

A sort of moral dyslexia has taken root in the newsrooms and editorial offices of America as they increasingly hew to the paradigms of the powerful. The news room has, in truth, become just one more corporate office and what we read in the morning paper now is not so much events refracted by the conscience -- or even lack thereof -- of the editors and writers as it is events molded by the exigencies of their career paths.

Beyond such external obstacles, however, remains the absence of a set of principles, of real coalitions, of a shared program upon which a wide variety of those in opposition to the political and cultural disintegration of America can agree. This is not a matter so much of contention as it is of recognition, organization and consensus. Until the various groups comprising the opposition speak much more with each other, little can be done.

Here then is the first order of business for the opposition. To discover who comprises it. To discover what they have in common. To build communities of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conscience based upon these discoveries and to find ways around a stagnant and servile media to tell its story to the rest of the country. -- *Sam Smith*

The vicious circles of the Bell Curve

Thomas S. Martin

It is tempting to ignore the controversy over Murray and Herrnstein's tract, *The Bell Curve*. Reviews of that tedious tome really belong in the tabloids, along with discussions of the O.J. trial and the current whereabouts of Elvis. Unfortunately the book has been taken seriously by the mainstream media and by academia, and so we must hold our noses and have a look at it anyway.

Murray and Herrnstein use an old academic trick: they bamboozle with majestic compilations of statistics so that the public does not notice the numbers measure something that isn't there at all. In studies of stock-market trends or cockroach populations, this may be harmless good fun; but when scholars apply the subterfuge to a society's most fundamental and divisive issues, it is sick and perverse.

In reading *The Bell Curve* one is reminded of the log books of the Nazi death camps, meticulously recording numbers of gold teeth and corpses, coldly reporting the results of autopsies on twin children who were the subjects of diabolical medical experiments, or of the scrupulously accurate ledgers kept by slave-ship captains. Like the data in these documents, the academic arguments of Murray and Herrnstein can only serve evil.

The *Bell Curve* controversy actually tells us more about our own national ignorance than it does about intelligence and race. All of the premises put forth by Herrnstein and Murray -- not some, but all -- have been thoroughly debunked, some of them long ago. The best summary in print of the true story is Stephen Jay Gould's *The Mismeasure of Man*, published fourteen years ago. Gould set out to denounce racist theories of intelligence from the early nineteenth century down to Cyril Burt and Arthur Jensen, but his book is just as useful in criticizing today's revival by Murray and Herrnstein. In a scathing critique of IQ testing from World War I to the 1970s, Gould demonstrates statistically, philosophically and culturally that IQ tests measure nothing at all -- unless it is the ability to take IQ tests, and even that is doubtful. These tests were designed specifically to allow classification and segregation of human beings into categories convenient to the ruling class and its intellectual servants -- providing a rational for ignoring, disparaging or oppressing those who were ruled.

As such they would be fundamentally tainted even if they actually measured something real. But they don't. Intelligence is a slippery concept, a complex, four-dimensional dynamic system otherwise known as human consciousness. It is Heraclitus' famous river, into which one cannot step twice. One might as well try to measure "love" or "spirituality" with paper and a Number 2 pencil. Since the publication of Gould's book, new and more radical critiques of the hereditarian thesis have been brought forward. The "multiple intelligences" theory is one of these. Recent studies have shown that financial status, athletic prowess, type of schooling, and other outside factors -- not IQ -- usually determine whether we end up as physicians or garbage collectors.

In *The Bell Curve* the question of intelligence is posed in an obsolete manner: is IQ influenced more by heredity or by environment? Even within the current paradigm (increasingly doubted by cutting-edge scientists), this is what logicians call a category-mistake.

Heredity and environment are not two distinct factors, existing side by side. They cannot be placed in the same category. "Environment" is the total *Gestalt* of all influences on an individual, the sum of all the components of whatever biological system of which we are a part.

Heredity, that is, the end product of the function of genes, is part of that environment. Of course it is a very major part, and substantially determines our physical and mental state, but it is still an environmental factor. To separate heredity and environment, to set them up in opposition to one another, is to commit the fundamental Cartesian error. It is no surprise that Murray and Herrnstein would make this mistake. Capitalism, racism, sexism and anti-ecological attitudes all have roots in the mechanistic and amoral Cartesian world-view. *The Bell Curve* is consistent with this central, albeit rapidly unraveling, Western paradigm.

Intelligence testing in all its present forms is based on a fundamental misreading of how the physical universe works. Western philosophy since Aristotle has assumed, and ever since Descartes has insisted, that the world is made up of discrete material entities, each independent in spite of multiple connections. This view is the opposite of holism, which considers the universe a single reality that expresses itself in a bewildering but interconnected diversity of phenomena. The world we see around us is the product of the relations among these phenomena; and the relations are not a byproduct of the material entities. Moreover, our holistic world is in constant flux; nothing stays the same from one moment to the next. This renders meaningless any concept of permanent, quantifiable entities like "intelligence," or molecules and galaxies, for that matter. Quantum physics proved holism decades ago, but most psychological inquiry still proceeds according to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the old belief that the parts are more fundamental than the connections.

Thus IQ testers continue to look for a single discrete entity called "intelligence," which they designate *g* so that it can be worked into impressive-looking formulae and statistical tables. They pigeonhole the various manifestations of human mentality into separate categories, and then isolate this group of elements from the rest of nature.

This reification of the dynamic is encouraged by the structure of the Western languages in which most scientists think. In English and its cousins the noun rather than the verb is fundamental; this compels us to see the world as consisting of objects rather than events. Speakers of American Indian languages, by contrast, have much less trouble understanding quantum physics than most of us, because their grammar is action-oriented rather than object-oriented.

Intelligence testing will never tell us anything useful unless it can somehow be made to measure the brain's output as a complex and multi-level dynamic operation. Indeed, we will have to stop thinking of intelligence as something "in the brain" -- because the brain cannot be separated from the rest of the body in any meaningful way, and the body cannot arbitrarily be isolated from its environment for purposes of study and quantification.

Fortunately, the publication of *The Bell Curve* was followed only a few months later by the crowning achievement of a leading geneticist: *The History and Geography of Human Genes*, written by Luca Cavalli-Sforza of Stanford along with several colleagues.

Cavalli-Sforza is not particularly interested in intelligence testing; his purpose is to show the patterns of human migration through history by comparing differences in DNA samples. His findings are at once shocking and reassuring.

Many scientists and anthropologists have long argued what has now been proved: that race is, genetically, an entirely meaningless concept. We are all far too closely related to be classified into races, unless the term is defined in some way other than genetically.

The genetic variations identified by the Cavalli-Sforza team are real, but they represent traits not ordinarily visible in the physical appearance of individuals. In fact we don't know what traits some of them govern, though presumably the Human Genome Diversity Project will eventually answer that question. These variations are the result of adaptation to different climates (for example, the number of sweat glands per square centimeter) and have little to do with heredity over the long haul. The widest genetic divergence in human groups separates the Africans from the Australian aborigines, though ironically these two 'races' have the same skin color. In between are the Mongoloid peoples, who include everyone from Malaysians and Chinese to Siberians, Eskimos and American Indians. Notice that there is no clearly distinguishable 'white race.' What Cavalli-Sforza calls the Caucasoids are a hybrid, about two-thirds Mongoloid and one-third African. Finns and Hungarians are slightly more Mongoloid, while Italians and Spaniards are more African, but the deviation is vanishingly slight. Subgroups exist within the other two 'races,' as well -- geneticists find three distinct Native American strains, and the Khoisan are somewhat different from the Bantu. Naturally enough, most genetic detective work focuses on these minute distinctions, and they are fascinating. But the real lesson lies in the absolute identity of the other 99.5% or so of all human genes. The implication is clear: if there are no races in the generally accepted sense of the word, then it is a pernicious waste of time to compare individual IQs by race. Even if we concede for the sake of argument that intelligence is indeed determined by heredity, the distribution of such an "intelligence gene" would have nothing whatever to do with race.

Last we come to the most egregious crime of the hereditarians: their selective abuse of the findings of the very scientists on whom they base their theories. Many of the pioneers in the study of intelligence realized that IQ was problematic at best and dangerous at worst. These misgivings do not trouble the sleep of hereditarians in the Gingrich era. Alfred Binet, the inventor of IQ testing, developed serious doubts about the message of his own work. He understood how easy it is to misinterpret apparently "hard" data in the light of one's own subconscious prejudices, and predicted that his method would be employed for political and social engineering ends. He saw intelligence testing as a practical, empirical device into whose results scientists should not read too much into. As early as 1905 he warned that the IQ scale "does not permit the measure of the intelligence, because intellectual qualities are not superposable, and therefore cannot be measured as linear surfaces are measured." Nearly all his successors have ignored this admonition. From Goddard's absurd studies of the Kallikak family (complete with crudely doctored photographs), to Burt's fraudulent data, to Jensen's bizarre version of evolution, and now to Murray and Herrnstein, the abuse of IQ has never been genuinely neutral or scientific. Let us hope that *The Bell Curve* quickly sinks into the oblivion it deserves.

Thomas S. Martin teaches at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio.

For copies of Sam Smith's
Shadows of Hope
send $25 to the
Progressive Review
1739 Connecticut Ave. NE
Washington DC 20009

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Towards a cooperative commonwealth

Some principles to share and some strategies to try

By Sam Smith

Some principles

We seek to be good stewards of our earth, good citizens of our country, good members of our communities and good neighbors of those who share these places with us.

We reject the immoderate tone of conventional politics, its appeal to hate and fear, its scorn for democracy, its preference for conflict over resolution, its servility to money and to those who possess it, and its deep indifference to the problems of ordinary Americans

We seek a cooperative commonwealth based on decency before profit, liberty before order, justice before efficiency, happiness before uniformity, communities before systems and people before institutions.

We believe that:

We should treat our politics, our country and each other with common decency, common sense and with a search for common ground.

When issues divide us deeply, we should seek ways to discuss them reasonably, out of the glare of the media and away from those who profit from such divisions.

We should leave the earth in better condition than we found it.

The physical and cultural variety of human beings is a gift and not a threat. We can not have a democracy without accepting those who are different from ourselves by nature or inclination.

We must protect the right of others to disagree with us so we shall be free to speak our own minds.

The self-sufficiency, well-being and stability of our communities and those living in them is our national economic goal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ecological principles should determine economic policies and not vice versa..

The first source of expertise is the wisdom of the people

Individuals possess fundamental rights that are inalienable and not contingent on responsibilities assigned by the state. These rights are to restrained only by a due concern for the health, safety, and liberty of others and are not to be made subservient to the arbitrary and capricious dictates of the state.

Citizens should participate directly in our democracy rather than being forced to rely upon surrogate media such as talk shows, polls and televised "town meetings."

The media should inform citizens and provide a means by which citizens may address government rather than serving primarily as a vehicle by which members of the government and elites tell citizens what to think.

Power should be decentralized to the lowest practical level.

The Bill of Rights and other constitutional provisions have deep permanence and are not to be manipulated or abridged for political gain.

Politics dependent on corporate financing and lobbyist influence is corrupt, anti-democratic and unacceptable.

Simplicity, conservation and recycling should be central to our economy, our politics and our lives.

Individual privacy is paramount and not to be subservient to the needs of the state.

Individual rights are manifestly superior to any granted corporations.

Our elected officials are servants and representatives, not rulers.

We need more community more than we need more things.

We are citizens and not merely taxpayers.
We own our government and not merely customers of it.

Some programs

COMMUNITIES

- Community-run public schools
- Strong urban neighborhood government including budgetary authority and the power to run programs
- Elected community courts and community constables to handle lesser offenses and disputes and to maintain community order.

CORPORATIONS

- Public interest requirements and term renewal for corporate charters

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

• Requirement that labor and the public be represented on the boards of major corporations
• Removal of corporate protection under the 14th Amendment

DEMOCRACY

• Increase the size of the House of Representatives by 50% and elect members by proportional representation.
• Institute proportional representation or preferential voting at all levels of politics.
• Elimination of barriers to third parties in elections
• Elimination of corporate and PAC contributions to elections, a limit of $100 individual contribution in campaigns, and/or public financing
• Encourage the creation of new states in order to make the Senate more representative of the nation for which it legislates.

DEVOLUTION

• Devolution of power to the lowest practical level.
• An end to extra-constitutional requirements that states and localities perform functions or lose federal funding.
• Return of authority over the national guard to the governors of the various states.

ECOLOGY

• The greening of economic development, zoning, and planning -- most particularly in our cities.
• The use of economic indicators that reflect the effect of the depletion of natural and human resources as well as the contributions of the non-cash economy.
• Eco-taxes to recover the costs of environmental degradation
• A bureau of environmental statistics similar to the Bureau of Labor Statistics

ECONOMICS

• An end to monetary policies encouraging high unemployment
• Non-demeaning economic and social assistance to those outside of the economic system.
•Emphasis on job-creating small business rather than on large corporations.
• Emphasis on the economic self-sufficiency of our communities.
• Emphasis on the 75% of our national product that comes from domestic activity rather than on the 25% that involves foreign trade.

FINANCES

• Interest-free loans from the federal government to states and localities for public works projects and repayment of existing debt.. Use of the federal government's sovereign power to create money to fund capital projects that add to the real wealth of the nation.
• Federal revenue sharing with the states to lessen the economic inequities among the states. .
• A federal capital budget

HEALTH

• A national health insurance program funded by federal taxes -- with decent health care the right of all citizens
• A end to the current barbaric war on drugs and its replacement with policies that treat addictions as a health, rather than as a criminal, matter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOUSING

- Revolving housing funds with the government serving as an equity partner with purchasers.
- The encouragement of accessory apartments and boarding homes.

JUSTICE

- Requirement that juries be informed of their common law right to judge both the law and the facts.
- Increasing the role of mediation, arbitration and other forms of dispute resolution.
- Firm action against all forms of discrimination but particularly in the neglected areas of housing and transportation.

MILITARY

- A major cut in the size of our military and in its expenditures.
- A program under which unneeded bases and plants are closed with workers seconded, at federal cost, to state and local government for a transition period.
- The development of a federal agency dedicated to international peacemaking and peacekeeping.

TAXATION

- A simplified income tax, limited in complexity and deductions while progressive in rates.
- Property taxation based on all forms of property and not just real estate.
- Split rate taxation on urban land and building to encourage the latter.
- Equalization of per- pupil funding of public schools within each state.

WORKERS

- An increase in the minimum wage
- Shorter hours of work, including a reduced work-week and longer vacations
- Expansion of labor's right to organize and speak.
- Creation of an American Association of Working People, modeled on the AARP to organize those workers unions have been unable to reach.

Feel free to copy, forward, post, borrow -- or, best of all, take action -- on any of the above.

To suggest additions, deletions or changes, drop us a line at

The Progressive Review
1739 Conn. Ave. NW
Washington DC 20009
202-232-5544 Fax: 202-234-6222
E-mail: ssmith@ igc.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Weather Report

Government by anecdote

The essence of Gingrichian politics is government by anecdote and adjective. The adjectives, of course, come straight from the language of advertising and propaganda. As for the anecdotes, it may be argued that Fib Newton is simply following a great southern political tradition, but in fact he has dramatically changed the function of political anecdotes. Where once they were used to get a laugh or make a metaphorical point, in the hands of someone like Gingrich they become a substitute for facts and thought, i.e. because a woman allegedly got too much in her law suit against McDonalds, we need complete tort reform. This is not a particularly advanced form of political thinking and until recently was common mainly to those who hung around the bar at bad taverns and fancy country clubs. Now it is forming the basis of much national policy.

Gingrich, of course, is not alone. For example, one increasingly hears media questions such as: "Do you feel that Judge Ito's permission to the witness to go to the bathroom is a sign of a national break-down in judicial authority?" We seem to have lost sight of the fact that not every event has inner meaning. Sometimes things just happen.

Politically, we have arrived at this peculiar frame of mind in no small part because of the liberal insistence on defending every fool result of their programs. All policies have unintended results and some of these can be outrageous and indefensible. By denying this simple fact of life, America's liberal establishment has provided the right with much of its platform which, in the final analysis, amounts to little more than a set of anecdotes parading as ideas.

Assuming that we have elections in the future, and assuming that at some point the current misery will have been ended, here's a suggestion for next time around. Just as we have a national product safety commission, we need a national policy sanity commission. This commission would be empowered to declare specific outcomes stemming from regulations and federal legislation to be impermissibly weird, unfair, ridiculous or exorbitant. The absurd result could be then swiftly banned and the rest of us could get back to dealing with real issues of national policy.

Reinventing Victorians

The media has been dutifully quoting Gingrich and his friends on the virtues of the Victorian era. Once again the speaker's certitude far out paces his competence. The Victorian age, even for the elite, was hardly a period of rampant morality. Instead it was a time of extreme moral pretense, not unlike that exhibited by Gingrich himself. Gingrich's ability to declaim about the need for more shame is eminently Victorian -- seeming full of virtue until placed up against, say, his disregard for the truth, his treatment of his cancer-ridden first wife or his attempt to hawk videotapes from the House floor via C-SPAN.

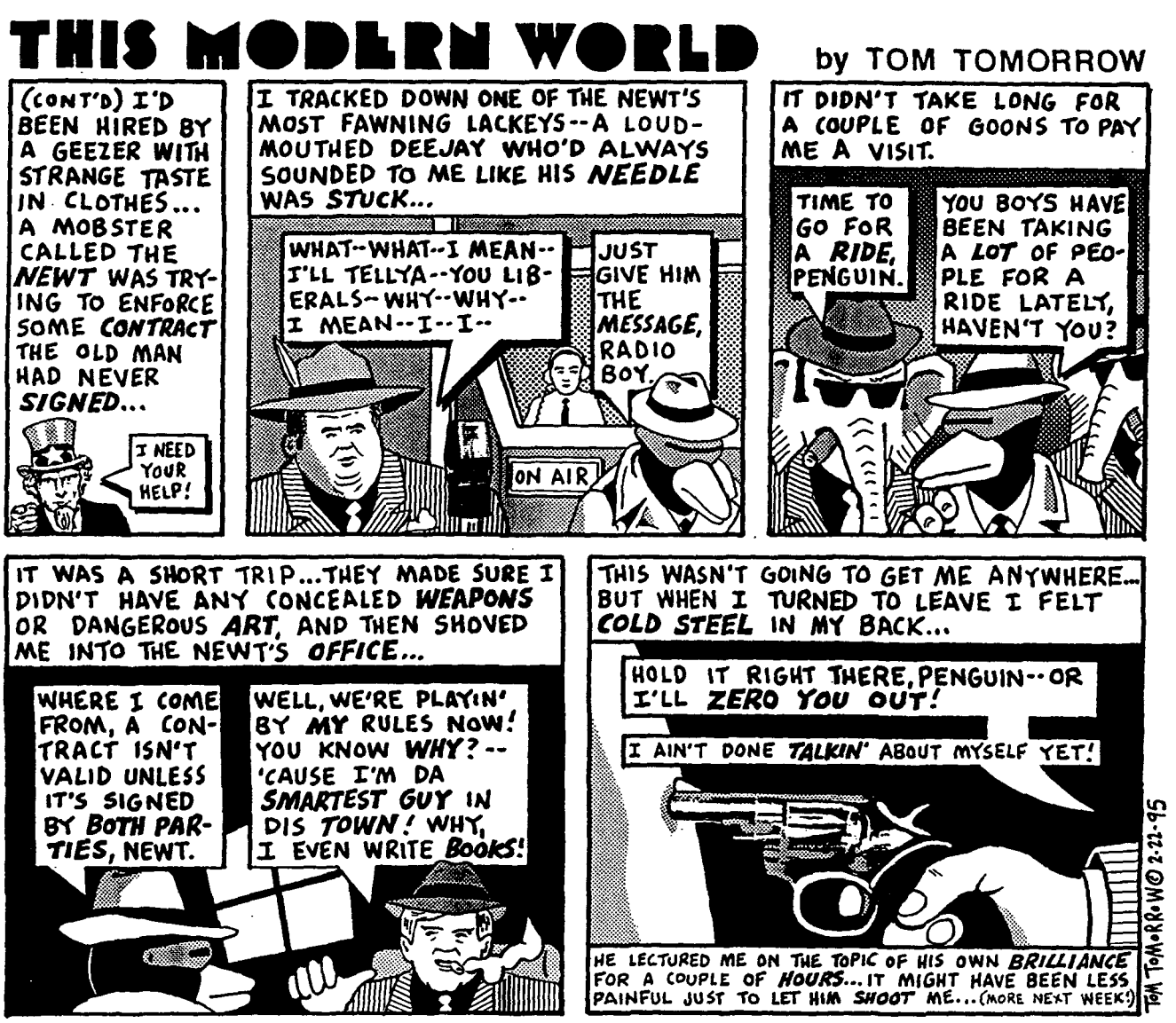
Similarly, the Victorians do not hold up well to moral scrutiny. Michael Foucault, for example, in *The History of Sexuality* asserts that in the Victorian culture, incest was both "a dreadful secret and an indispensable pivot." Karen Sanchéz-Eppler, writing in the current issue of the journal of the American Studies Association, says that recent work on incest and pedophilia in Victorian society suggests that "sexual attraction to children, however strenuously denied and demonized, nevertheless informs nineteenth century conceptions of desire, domesticity, and even of innocence itself." Sanchéz-Eppler who examined popular literature of the day -- particularly that of the temperance movement -- found repeated examples of drunken fathers getting into bed with their daughters as well as this gem from a book called *Perfect Men, Women, and Children, in Happy Families:*

> Every son, 'Behold they mother!' Make love to her, and her your first sweetheart. Be courteous, gallant and her knight-errant, and your nearest friend and bosom confident. Nestle yourself right into her heart, and her into yours. Seek her 'company' and advice, and imbibe her purifying influences. Learn how to court by courting her. No other society will equally sanctify and instruct.

Sex aside, the Victorian era was not all that pleasant time in which to live, especially if you were poor. The establishment assumption, both in England and in the US, was that the poor had brought their troubles upon themselves. A US advocate of this view was a Yale Law School graduate by the name of Russell Conwell, who went around post-Civil War America giving a lecture called "Acres of Diamonds" -- 5000 times, in fact -- on the virtues of wealth and the rich. In it, Conwell declared that: "The number of the poor who are to be sympathized with is very small. To sympathize with a man whom God has punished for his sins . . . is to do wrong . . . Let us remember there is not a poor person in the United States who was not made poor by his own shortcomings."

The Victorians believed firmly in the regimentation of the poor. As late as 1913, even an early Fabian like Beatrice Webb could still be suggesting the division of the deserving poor from idle loafers, the latter to be subjected to "compulsory training, or military or other training . . . absorbing the whole time of the man from 6 am to 10 pm." Victorian morality also brought us lots of alcoholism, the counterpoint excesses of the temperance movement, the cruelty of the Darwinians and a proto-fascist fascination with eugenics.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


THIS MODERN WORLD
by TOM TOMORROW
(CONT'D) I'D BEEN HIRED BY A GEEZER WITH STRANGE TASTE IN CLOTHES... A MOBSTER CALLED THE NEWT WAS TRYING TO ENFORCE SOME CONTRACT THE OLD MAN HAD NEVER SIGNED...
I NEED YOUR HELP!
I TRACKED DOWN ONE OF THE NEWT'S MOST FAWNING LACKEYS--A LOUD-MOUTHED DEEJAY WHO'D ALWAYS SOUNDED TO ME LIKE HIS NEEDLE WAS STUCK...
WHAT--WHAT--I MEAN--I'LL TELLYA--YOU LIBERALS--WHY--WHY--I MEAN--I--I--
JUST GIVE HIM THE MESSAGE, RADIO BOY.
ON AIR
IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR A COUPLE OF GOONS TO PAY ME A VISIT.
TIME TO GO FOR A RIDE, PENGUIN.
YOU BOYS HAVE BEEN TAKING A LOT OF PEOPLE FOR A RIDE LATELY, HAVEN'T YOU?
IT WAS A SHORT TRIP...THEY MADE SURE I DIDN'T HAVE ANY CONCEALED WEAPONS OR DANGEROUS ART, AND THEN SHOVED ME INTO THE NEWT'S OFFICE...
WHERE I COME FROM, A CONTRACT ISN'T VALID UNLESS IT'S SIGNED BY BOTH PARTIES, NEWT.
WELL, WE'RE PLAYIN' BY MY RULES NOW! YOU KNOW WHY?--'CAUSE I'M DA SMARTEST GUY IN DIS TOWN! WHY, I EVEN WRITE BOOKS!
THIS WASN'T GOING TO GET ME ANYWHERE... BUT WHEN I TURNED TO LEAVE I FELT COLD STEEL IN MY BACK...
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, PENGUIN--OR I'LL ZERO YOU OUT!
I AIN'T DONE TALKIN' ABOUT MYSELF YET!
HE LECTURED ME ON THE TOPIC OF HIS OWN BRILLIANCE FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS... IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LESS PAINFUL JUST TO LET HIM SHOOT ME... (MORE NEXT WEEK!)
TOM TOMORROW 2-22-95

It was not a happy time to be un-rich and un-powerful, even if your drunken father didn't try to get into bed with you. What is telling about this period is what happened in its wake. As Margaret Canovan points out in her biography of Chesterton, there came to be an "increasing conviction, among Liberals and Tories, as well as Socialists, that social welfare was a national responsibility, and could not be left to private charity. The work of social investigators . . . had demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that poverty and destitution were not merely an accidental condition into which the idle and improvident might fall, but the normal state of at least a third of the whole population. "

When England went to fight the Boer War, the toll of Victorian culture proved enormous: 40% of the men recruited by the army were found to be unfit. Canovan quotes one Lord Roseberry as saying, "An Empire such as ours requires as its first condition an imperial race -- a race vigorous and industrious and intrepid . . . In the rookeries and slums which still survive, an imperial race cannot be reared . . . Remember that where you promote health and arrest disease, where you convert an unhealthy citizen into a healthy one . . . you in doing your duty are also working for the Empire."

There is irony here and not just the thought that Lord Roseberry was, despite it all, somewhere to the left of Newton Gingrich. In fact, the British government responded to the damage of the Victorian era by appointing a Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Upon its recommendations, free school lunches were instituted in 1906 and compulsory medical examinations in 1907. Sic transit Victoria.

Just politics

Here are some facts about black families noted in a *Washington* Post op-ed piece by Paul Offner of Sen. Patrick Moynihan's staff.: Poverty rate for black children in 1973: 41%. In 1993: 46%. Percent of black families headed by women in 1973: 40%. In 1993: 56%. Percent of black births occurring out of wedlock: 46% in 1973 to 68% in 1992. ✒ Proves William Bennett was right when he said that welfare has been "the most pernicious program of the past quarter-century." Right? Wrong.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

During this same period, the percent of black families on welfare has dropped from 37% to 33%.

Land of the free

The similarly egregious senators Biden and Specter, along with Rep. Schumer and Dicks, have introduced an anti-civil liberties bill what would provide a maximum ten year sentence for those who support the lawful activities of an organization the president has declared to be a terrorist group. In the past, such organizations might well have included the African National Congress, the IRA or the PLO. There would be no appeal to the presidents ruling. ✒ The bill also authorizes secret trials for immigrants accused of supporting such organizations. ✒ And it would suspend the *posse comitatus* act and allow the use of the military in domestic law enforcement, something that has been prohibited in the US for over a hundred years. The corporate media -- save for Anthony Lewis in the *New York Times* -- has ignored this outrageous end run around the Constitution.

The corporate state

One reason there have been so many stories about the immigration status of those in the employ of Clinton nominees is because the media appears to have lost its capacity to consider anything more complicated. Otherwise there might be some interest in Clinton's choice for CIA director, John Deutch, who -- like Defense Secretary Perry and Pentagon official Anita Jones -- was once a director of SAIC, a contractor that earns more than $1.7 billion a year, 90% of it from the Pentagon. Almost-defense secretary Bobby Ray Inman served on the board as did actual ex-defense secretary Melvin Laird.

Financial World reported last August that SAIC was under government investigation. In fact, "the SAIC probe is no small matter, judging by the manner of its execution. On Feb. 15 a huge Air Force truck pulled up outside the company's headquarters in San Diego. It left a few hours later filled with 200,000 pages of documents seized by the Pentagon's Defense Criminal Investigative Service and the Air Force Office of Special Investigation." At issue was the handling of funds as well as statements made to the Air Force involving SAIC projects in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Since Perry and Deutch were running the Pentagon at the time of the investigation, you might have thought this created a slight conflict of interest problem. But DOD got around it by saying that neither had any "knowledge or involvement" in the contracts under investigation, a conclusion that might have more properly been reached *after* the investigation. Neither Perry nor Deutch recused themselves.

This was not the first time SAIC had been in trouble. Back in 1990, when Perry and Laird were on the board, the company was charged with wrong-doing on government work. Laird wrote a personal letter to the then Attorney General, Richard Thornburgh, asking for an end to the prosecution noting among other things that Perry, Deutch and Inman had all been named to the Foreign Intelligence Board by President Bush. The investigation was put on hold until the letter -- uncovered by the Project on Government Oversight -- was leaked to the Senate. The prosecution then resumed.

Then in 1993, says *Financial World,* Perry and Deutch got a letter from the chair of Martin Marietta wrote the pair asking for help in defense acquisitions. Although both Perry and Deutch had links to Martin Marietta, then Defense Secretary Les Aspin let them handle the matter, arguing that the importance of their involvement "outweighs the concern that a reasonable person may question [their] impartiality in the matter. " The result was a windfall for Martin Marietta.

When *Time* magazine wrote in 1993 about how "a growing number of legislators and business leaders are pushing to allow American companies to call on the services" of the CIA for corporate spying, the story's lead focused on the experiences of a California hi-tech company known as SAIC. Deutch, who exemplifies classic Washington behavior that has less in common with a revolving door than it does with a laundry chute, now moves to the CIA.

Field Notes

The current issue of Urban Ecology is devoted to an important but long neglected subject: urban design and women. Along with articles it includes a useful bibliography. *[$4 from Urban Ecology, 405 14th St. #701, San Francisco CA 94612]*

The Third Parties '96 conference is picking up steam. The conference will be held June 1-4 at George Washington University. Co-sponsors include leaders prominent in the Green, New, Patriot, DC Statehood and Umoja parties, as well as the Virginia Citizens Coalition and the Progressive Review. The call is being expanded to include various political and social action groups around the country. The conference will provide an important opportunity for communities, political parties and individuals of conscience to join together in a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

counter-offensive against what amounts to a rightwing coup against the Constitution and simple decency.

The call says in part, "Our goal is to seek agreement on a statement of shared principles -- to promote this statement and the spirit behind it to stimulate third party coalitions in the states. We are not convinced that Third Parties '96 will result in a national presidential campaign in 1996, but it will present ample opportunities for cross-party fertilization and the assimilation of single issue and movement activists into the electoral arena. It will provide a national forum for our issues and the opportunities to present these positions to the national media. It may give heart to those citizens who feel the political process and their elected representatives have left them without options to a two-party system."

If you or your organization is interested in this conference send an e-mail message to lindamartin@igc.org or you can fax a note to Sam Smith at the Review at 202-234-6222 or call 202-232-5544.

Thomas Constantine, chief of the Drug Enforcement Administration: "No matter how much we seize, it doesn't seem to change the amount coming into the country." You noticed.

Roadsigns

Number of state prisons under court order to improve conditions: 30 *[Legal Times]*

Federal deficit as a percent of GDP in 1945: 22%. In 1993: 5% *[Rainbow Coalition]*

US railroad freight tonnage as a percent of US truck freight tonnage: 150%. Freight railroad fuel use as a percent of truck fuel use: 18% *[American Association of Railroads quoted in Train Riders]*

White males as a percent of the total population: 33%. As a percent of tenured professors: 80%. As a percent of the House of Representatives: 80%. As a percent of the Senate: 90%. As a percent of the Forbes 400: 97%. As a percent of school superintendents: 97%. As a percent of professional athletic team owners: 99.9%. As a percent of all US presidents: 100%. *[Rainbow Coalition]*

THE PROGRESSIVE REVIEW
1739 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington DC 20009-8922

Use this form to subscribe, renew or change your address

[ ] One year $17
[ ] Two years $31
[ ] Foreign one year $27
[ ] Contribution enclosed $_____
[ ] Please correct my address at right

Mail with check to address above

SUBSCRIBER NEWSLETTER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED